/87 cont./

583 then, allows the transference of a woman from one man to another like any domestic animal and also the easy conversion of an illegal relationship to a legal one by paying for the woman.

But where the payment plays the most important social part
583 -- if we consider the different social classes found in La Guajira
565 -- is in the fixing of the social status of each woman and her descendants.

The status of a clan group rests on the marriage value of its women. This valuation dates back to distant times and has been transmitted from mother to daughter. For this reason the Guajiro when speaking of the price of a woman says: A free Guajiro woman is worth as much as her mother cost, and the latter had the same price as her grandmother. This is why payment for a woman has such enormous importance in her life and why, when she comes out of seclusion, all her attention and interest is concentrated on one thing: to be bought well, which amounts to finding someone who values her as she should be valued. It is also for this reason that white people cannot understand the pride with which a Guajiro woman relates that she was bought very dearly or that more cows were given for her than for some other woman. In the number of these heads of livestock is the valuation of her standing and the recognition that she belongs to the rich Guajiro class of better status. Hence she resorts to every kind of magic within her power to be bought well, to find a man who, paying for her what was paid for her mother, establishes her status, or paying even more, he being rich, raises her standing immediately by recognizing her personal qualities which make her worthy of such an increase; for if a woman cannot be bought (in normal times in her clan group) for less than the price paid for her mother, she can, on the contrary improve her standing through a higher price. In this way, the daughters born to the couple will be more expensive; that is to say, their status will have advanced as compared with /88/ that of their grandmother; and the man, if it is true that he has made an investment greater than he was legally obliged to, has increased his prestige, by having acquired

/88 cont./

583 for himself a woman who was worth so much; also his outlay will
565 be compensated by the payment he will receive for the first daughter who marries, which will be identical with what he paid for her mother.

583 Another interesting point is the regulating aspect the payment has on the moral and social conduct of a woman before marriage, since it obliges her indirectly to accept and comply with all the determined ethical and social norms, without which her value as a future wife would go down. For example, when the woman belongs to a high class, she must not accept proposals to elope with a man who loves her but who lacks sufficient money to buy her. This is allowed, however, in women of a lower social class who have no standing to lose, where there is not sufficient force to back the claims their relatives might make, and where their value as wives is not constant but varies, depending almost always on the financial capacity of the buyer and very often on the economic situation at the moment. In summer /the dry season/, for example, things get so bad in these lower classes that a woman can be bought for a little corn.

582 These facts give rise to a certain stabilization of the existing difference of status, for the women of high class can only be bought by men of the same or better position, which limits in this way the possibilities of acquiring a rich woman and prevents high-class family groups being mixed with poor groups or those of a lesser social standing.

583 A woman who wants to maintain her standing cannot run away with a man and be paid for later. This implies that the man, after a time, if he is not satisfied, can repudiate her for this act alone, paying only for having abused her, which, if of little importance to a woman of low social standing, is definitely very important for one of high standing. Also, if the compensation claim is not met peacefully or if the payment is not made, war may be provoked between her group and that of her husband, and all the consequences fall on her. It can also happen that the man, in view of the accomplished fact, may wish to take advantage of a

/127 cont./

586 home life impossible. If she can prove this, the law exempts the woman's relatives from returning the marriage payment and only obliges them to hand over one of the children of the marriage. In other words, the man's ill-treatment of the woman permits her to abandon the home and return to her maternal one. But in this case, as in any other in which customary law comes into play, it is necessary that the litigant party possess sufficient force to oblige the other party to comply with what is legal. If not, if the offended one is completely in the right but lacks this force, he will never manage to make his just claim effective. They tell of an infinite number of cases in which the acts of cruelty suffered by women of an inferior clan at the hands of their husbands are so grave that any one alone would be sufficient cause to dissolve the marriage through the return of the woman to her maternal home. But the maternal family of the husbands inhibited the women to such an extent that many of them, unable to offer any resistance, died at the hands of their husbands without the law -- so severe in cases in which blood is spilled -- being able to oblige the culprits to pay a suitable payment.

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The demoralization which the Guajiro of lower class has suffered due to the different causes we have noted has weakened marriage ties to such a point that the woman considers her obligation broken when her husband emigrates, harrassed by the vital necessity to obtain something to feed himself and his family, or when she finds herself abandoned for a long number of years, in which case she /128/ goes away with whoever will satisfy her economic and biological needs, thus dissolving, if not by law at least by act, a tie which may not be broken by anything but her own society, and so breaking up slowly but dangerously the traditional culture of her community.

[38 cont.]

538 medicine man, after his death, and it is only then that he can
*756 himself exercise his profession by himself, having at his service a terrestial intermediary, to whom he communicates by various means his methods of curing, events of the future, etc. This equally confirms our thesis, fully expounded previously, that the shaman is a man of two worlds: the world of the living and the world inhabited by the spirits of the dead. Lastly, it reaffirms what we have said in reply to Métraux's statement, that the feminine institution of shamanism in La Guajira is not due to the influence of European culture (which is only now beginning to be strongly felt) but is as ancient as their oral literature.

174 Present position of the shaman. If we consider socio-
565 economic conditions in La Guajira in the Pre-conquest epoch, which placed the natives in a position of a people engaged essentially in hunting and in fishing on the coasts (36), we have to

> 36. Restrepo Tirado says: "The Guajiro and Cocina [Kusina] Indians occupy La Guajira Peninsula. They were nomads and lived by hunting and fishing in improvised encampments, which they moved from one site to another." (Historia de la Provincia de Santa Marta [History of the Province of Santa Marta], 1st, I, 15.)

accept as a fact a virtual equality between the different clans which composed the community. The superiority of one or various clans over the rest was possibly due to their greater aptitudes for war or the greater number of fighting men they had at their command. Riches would be represented by valuable adornments, necklaces of gold or of tuma, pearls, etc. [39]

174 In such a state of affairs under the primitiveness which we
554 can presume existed in the Guajiro community of that time, the
*756 shaman must have occupied the first place in the social hierarchy. His undiminished supernatural powers, his position as intermediary between the community and the world of the dead, the fears which his powers provoked were all sufficient reasons for him to be respected and feared above all and by all.

4: Petrullo E-5 (1935) 1937
SC13 Goajiro SC13

the men speak some Spanish in addition to their native language. Some of them know how to read and write. They are almost entirely pastoral, possessing great herds of horses, asses, sheep, goats, and cattle. They have borrowed a great deal from the Europeans but they have also kept their own culture to a remarkable degree. As usual, native elements are most strongly present in the non-material phases of culture. Unfortunately they are not united or organized into a modern state, though against all foreigners they stand together as a unit. Authority is acquired by certain caciques through their wealth and membership in the 'casta,' the major social grouping in Guajiro society. Each casta claims a mythological origin and holds sovereignty over a well-defined territory. Many of these castas or social groupings are further subdivided. Each casta has its caciques whose function is chiefly to settle disputes and whose position is inherited, matrilineally. The oldest of them is allowed more authority, but generally it is the wealthiest man, and the one who can marshal more retainers, armed with rifles and revolvers, who is listened to with greater respect. There are further divisions in Guajiro society. At the top are the caciques and their families who are rich and powerful. The next group is composed of peons or retainers in the service of the upper stratum, and at the bottom are the 'slaves' who have been born in that condition or have been enslaved following an offense to some powerful group, and who can even be let out to work for planters in the sugar fields of Zulia The life of the poor people has not changed much since early times. Polygamy is widely practised, as is also concubinage, by the wealthier men. Each wife lives in her own rancho and there awaits the occasional visit of her husband. The children inherit property and social affiliations through the mother. Disputes that arise within a casta are settled by arbiters chosen by the families of the litigants. Disputes inter-casta may be settled by arbitration if violence is not desirable. Generally the killing of an individual gives rise to armed action with an eventual composition by payment.

105 [233] [554] 614 631 [556] 565 [567] 595 [611] [627] [628]

My informants attempted to demonstrate the difference be- 671

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

423 614 It is, of course, only the usufruct that is inherited. The land can neither be sold nor given away, for it belongs to the clan. All members of a clan have the right to pasture their herds in the clan's territories, and every man also has the right to graze his beasts and to use wood and water in the lands belonging to his wife's clan. That is one of the advantages he acquires in return for the bride-price he has paid.

565 614 There has developed a class distinction unusual among Indians on the primitive level. A man of simple origins can sometimes marry into a high-born family, but he does not become any the better for that, though his children belong to their mother's aristocratic clan. It is, however, seldom that a man of humble family can get himself a girl from the upper classes—that could only happen if he had inherited or had relatives who could help him pay the bride-price.

583 614 This is so high that a young man almost always has to have the help of his clan to pay it. The relatives of a girl of really good family may demand £2000 worth of cattle, while a girl of humbler stock can be had for £50 worth. The amount can be paid in money, but that is only done in the south, in the areas belonging to Venezuela, where the Indians are more accustomed to coins and have confidence in gold.

It must not be imagined that this is a question of purchase like buying a donkey, a cow or a slave. It is a transaction that concerns both clans. One should not marry within one's [178] own clan. In the old days that was forbidden, but now they are not so strict, since the clans are often split into local sub-groups. The whole marriage transaction is well adapted to the social and economic system. (When, during the first oil rush, white workers from the Maracaibo oil fields bought poor girls, usually of half-breed parents, those were transactions whose legality under Guajiro law was merely fictitious.) The bridegroom's family helps him to pay the bride-price and contributes generously if the girl is of good family. The bride-price is to some extent regarded as compensation for what the family expended on the girl while she was growing up.

When a couple's first daughter marries, the father asks

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

583 man cannot immediately pay any worthwhile part of the
614 bride-price. The young man may then abduct the girl with the tacit consent of her parents, and thereby postpone having to pay the bride-price. After some time, the girl's relatives will require payment, but meantime his family will have been trying to scrape together at least a first instalment.

Genuine abduction does occur occasionally, but only when the man knows that the girl's clan is weak and that her relatives will thus have difficulty in claiming their rights. He will take the girl as far away as possible. If he is caught, her relatives will try to demand a bride-price. Perhaps he is already tired of the girl by then and wants to return her. She is the clan's property and is not being returned un-
583 damaged, so the man must pay damages for seduction and,
●565 if the girl is pregnant, also for childbirth.

614 In the lower classes that would dispose of the matter.
684 The baby would in any event be taken into the mother's clan and have her name. In the upper classes a girl would be turned out if she had had such an accident and the considerable damages required had not been paid immediately. The clan's prestige cannot be allowed to suffer.

Indian girls never keep a seducer's name secret, but at once tell their family who he is.

Among the lower classes cases of wives eloping are said to occur. The man to whom they have gone can legalize the position by paying compensation to the husband. If the husband agrees to do a deal, he cannot ask as much as the bride-price he himself paid, for the girl is by then less valuable.

560 It follows from all this that a woman has not the right to
583 dispose of her own body. She belongs to her mother's family until she marries, and her closest relatives must be compensated for any injury done her. Once the man has paid the bride-price she becomes his property. If she is
[768] widowed, she is inherited along with the rest of his effects by his nephews (sister's sons) and she has to purchase her freedom from them, paying a sum equivalent to the bride-price less what she is held to have lost in value since mar-
riage.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

In another game the dangerous spirit Yoruyá attacks and kills Indian after Indian till he is set upon by them all and killed; in yet another the Indians hide in a cloud made of cloaks, when the spirit forces its way in, but it is captured by the cloud and vanquished.

Horse-racing is one of the Indians' greatest pleasures at their festivities, but they also indulge in it—without horses—as a game in connection with the dances. Very amusing and picturesque is a game in which they imitate hunting a kind of bird that plunders the seed in their fields. The Indians pretend to be trying to scare them and catch them in nets. Here the seed is represented by some children, some of the men are the birds, others the hunters who catch the birds in their hammocks and then wring their necks!

Another game represents a fight between jaguars and dogs. The strongest of the men are made the jaguars, for these have to win. Then there is a snake game in which men and women crawl along together, imitating the movements of a snake and singing the snake song: 'I am the snake. I creep along the ground. I do harm to none, but punish those who try to trample me. Long must he suffer, who tramps upon me because he thinks me defenceless since I creep on the ground. He must suffer and die.' There are endless variations; but a dance lasts so long that a little variety is necessary.

Once the upper-class dance, the chichamaya, was over, Mauana's people gladly showed us all their games and dances even though it was not the right time of year.

As we were riding home the next day we encountered several companies of Indians returning from a burial-feast. Among them was a young man in a beautifully woven mantle, who joined up with us. He spoke good Spanish and obviously belonged to the upper class. Francisco told him about us, and he was eager that we should be his guests that same day, since his rancho lay on our route. He said that he had a few things that I might well find interesting and he himself would like to see one of my pistols. (Francisco had evidently described how they smoked and made a bang.) Some of the Indians accompanying us now became

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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him that can give the alarm. For a long time he has to refrain from all association with his friends and keep away from feasts. In the end, if agreement on compensation is not reached with the dead man's family, he will have to leave the district for a period of years. This precaution is to protect the slayer from the spirit of the man he killed, which would look for him in his normal haunts and would not recognize him under the new conditions, but it is also a protection against the dead man's nearest relatives, who will thirst for vengeance as long as compensation has not been agreed and paid.

We mounted and rode away from our first burial feast. On the fringe of the area stood six Indians armed, some with guns, others with bows and arrows. Their task was to shoot after all departing guests in order to scare off any dangerous spirits that might be intending to keep them company. Here, a deputy-host presented us with a live heifer. Every guest was to have a present of an animal according to his rank. We also had the meat that had been distributed that morning. It was considered quite all right either to eat it or to take it to eat on the way home. Several others were doing as we and there was a long line of departing guests, the men on horseback, the women mostly on donkeys. We all kept together for quite a distance.

Spirits rose as the heat increased, for drink had been handed out along with the meat, the Indians believing, as did the Creoles, that spirits were the best protection against the dangers of the hot sun.

A young Indian rode up to us. He wore a cloak with a beautiful pattern and was mounted on a splendid mare, which showed that he was of well-to-do family. He was in a bad mood, however, having been forgotten in the distribution of parting gifts and had not been given even a sheep. For that reason he was highly incensed with his neglectful hosts, whom he obviously scarcely knew.

We rode past an old man on foot dragging a calf behind him. The old man was obviously sober, but he kept muttering imprecations to himself. He too had been forgotten.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

765 The old man, however, was familiar with the customs of
565 olden days and had taken what they had forgotten to give him, calculating generously in his own favour. Strictly he was entitled to no more than a kid, if that, poor relation that he was; but he had appropriated one of his host's calves.

Our young Indian friend thought this an excellent idea, and as we happened to be riding past a herd of goats belonging to the house of mourning, he asked me to lend him my shot-gun, dismounted and shot two goats, which he then lashed on to his pack-animal. He paid no attention to the protests of the slave guarding the herd, who of course did not dare do anything to anyone so well dressed and so obviously a person of rank. He gruffly told the slave that he had the law on his side. This put the young Indian in a better humour, and he took a smiling leave of us.

765 We were invited to several other funeral feasts while we
579 were in Guajira. Both the actual burial and the after-funeral were in the same style. Often they were quite gay affairs—especially the repeat performance, when the grief was not so intense even with the immediate relatives. Often fights resulted. On the way home from Mauana's dance we had met people on their way back from a funeral who were quarrelsome. It sometimes happens that a person attending a funeral is killed. He is then taken home and most of the guests accompany him to continue celebrating in that new house of sorrow.

The funeral ritual is observed strictly and in detail. Children must learn it early and therefore are allowed to go to such feasts.

On the more important events the medicine man gives advice and directions, so let us now turn to him.

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
SC13 Goajiro SC13

175 During the Colonial Period, the *Goajiro* were hostile toward the Span-
648 iards. After 1830, however, as a result of better treatment from the Whites, thanks in part to the efforts of Juan MacPherson, they become more friendly. Present authorities in the *Goajiro* region merely regulate frontier traffic.

797 The attempts by the Capuchin Fathers to alter their ways of life have
177 been unsuccessful. Except for the thin Catholic veneer, noticeable in baptismal rites and Spanish names, *Goajiro* social life seems to have been little affected by centuries of contact with Hispanic culture. Foreign influence is more apparent materially in iron implements, utensils, guns, textiles, and ornaments. All the domestic animals are of Spanish origin.

161 As a result of tuberculosis, smallpox, and venereal disease, the *Goajiro*
164 are gradually dying out, and the population estimates found in the literature have become smaller and smaller, the most recent indicating a scant 18,000.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

142 The *Goajiro* are usually described as aggressive and untrustworthy, of
[18] medium or small stature (cf. J. A. Mason, 1926, pp. 39, 52), copper colored, with jet-black hair, dark eyes rather obliquely set, a broad and blunt nose, and a large mouth (pl. 72, *bottom, right*). Within the tribes there are physical differences which seem to correspond with social status,
[565] the lower classes being smaller and more Indian in appearance, while those of higher rank are more often of a greater stature, with curlier hair and larger noses.

LANGUAGE

197 The *Goajiro* language belongs to the *Arawakan* family. There is, however, no good analysis of it. A grammar, "replete with errors" according to Simons, was published by Rafael Caledon in 1878. Various word lists have been published from time to time.

CULTURE

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

241 **Farming.**—The *Goajiro* have a poor opinion of agriculture, and only
[558] the poorer sibs practice it. The one fertile part of the peninsula is near Punta Espada. Here the land is well cultivated, and plantains, maguey, onions, coca, sugarcane, and grain are grown. Tobacco, bananas, maize, gourds, manioc, sweetpotatoes, millet, beans, and watermelons also are raised. Those who own cattle grow only small patches of quick-maturing corn for the purpose of making chicha beer.

22 **Hunting, fishing, and gathering.**—Hunting, fishing, and gathering occupy a minor place. Deer, armadillos, land tortoises, and rabbits are

622 Chiefs are polygynous and have many daughters, for
595 whom very high bride prices are paid—sometimes thousands of animals,
583 worth $6,000 to $10,000. Such rich chiefs take great pride in their
556 daughters, dressing them in fine silken robes and necklaces of gold and pearls and providing them with personal servants.

567 There is a class of slaves who are beneath the chiefs' retainers in the social hierarchy. It consists of people born into this status and of captives.

PROPERTY

422 All cattle, though individually owned, belong in theory to the local group as a whole and are worked for the common benefit of all. For example, the cattle paid as a bride price when a girl marries within her own sib go to a new owner, but the milk, butter, cheese, and hides from them continue to be shared by everyone in the sib. When a woman receives cattle as a bride price for her daughter any new stock born to them belongs to the daughter's husband and his sons, and when the animals are rounded up for the annual branding each son is allowed to brand a certain number of them.

ETIQUETTE

576 The *Goajiro* are in general unfriendly to strangers but have a well-
574 established code of hospitality. Strangers calling at a house must wait until invited in. Inside a house a bowl of chicha or rum (coffee when available) is the first gift offered the visitor, who is thereafter given a hammock and treated as a member of the family. A special feast may
565 be arranged if there are many guests. A guest of high rank is feasted, and some of the young girls of the house may be placed at his disposal.

LAW AND ORDER

627 The chiefs have little power outside their own local group, where they settle minor disputes. The solution of many disputes and transgressions of custom are left to the parties concerned. The laws of group respon-
628 sibility and group retaliation lead to frequent intertribal feuds. A person
614 without a strong sib to protect him is helpless, for others may use any act which may conceivably be interpreted as harmful as pretext for demanding indemnity. For example, a person injured while intoxicated may demand payment from the person who sold him the rum, or a person injured by a borrowed animal may demand payment from the owner of the animal; a thief who hurts himself when trespassing on the property of his intended victim will demand compensation of him; and anyone aiding a sick or wounded person who subsequently dies incurs a liability.

672 If a person injures himself he must make an expiatory gift to the members of his own sib and a lesser gift to his father's relatives. If a child dies when under the care of one parent, this parent must reimburse

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
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the other. Many other cases indicate the absolute nature of *Goajiro* law 672
and the refusal to recognize extenuating circumstances.

Murder is a very serious crime, and the victim's family immediately 682
demands blood money to the amount of 200 or more cattle. For failure 628
to pay, a member of the murderer's sib of the same rank as the victim must forfeit his life. If payment is not forthcoming retaliatory raids are made. As the defenders generally lose more people than the attackers, the feud may continue indefinitely until all the members of one sib will consider themselves at war with the members of the other, thereby spreading the war throughout the peninsula. If a feud should develop between the sib of the husband and that of the wife, the latter, with her children, will return to her own group until the trouble is over.

A person who has received a deadly insult from another is baited and 683
chided until he takes revenge by killing the offender, in proof of which he removes the victim's viscera and takes them home. This act also prevents the victim's soul from bothering him. If unable to accomplish this he may commit suicide. Suicide is also sometimes a means of venge- 762
ance, a person feeling that he will suffer less than those who caused him to commit the act. Thus a wife who is not allowed enough freedom may hang herself.

Next to murder, one of the most serious offenses is to mention a per- 689
son's true name (given at birth?) or to mention a person's name after his death. This has caused many tribal conflicts.

The value of the compensation demanded in disputes varies directly 681
with the social rank of the offended party. In some cases a repeated 565
offender may be killed by his own sib members. Sometimes, rather than 728
to continue the warfare, hostile sibs may confer under the auspices of an outsider, such as a Capuchin monk, and draw up peace terms. In personal quarrels or minor brawls women often step in and enforce peace.

WARFARE

Wars between the *Goajiro* and outsiders are rare, but any White man 721
may be held liable for the offense done by another, as all Whites are thought 609
to belong to the same sib. Sometimes the few civilized people living in the peninsula take vengeance on the Indians, which leads to further reprisals by the latter.

At the time of De la Rosa, war was declared by sending to the other 721
tribe an ambassador who, in a public speech, asked indemnities for damage previously done. If these were not conceded war was declared, but a brief truce was observed in order that preparations might be made. In battle each group of opposing warriors formed a semicircle and tried to surround and destroy the other. In individual encounters a *Goajiro* rode 726
out on a horse, but, upon seeing the enemy, he dismounted and shot his own horse with an arrow to show his confidence and willingness to fight